

DECEMBER 1995

OPEN ARMS

VOL. 7 NUMBER 12

..... MICHIANA'S LESBIAN NEWSLETTER

PARADISE OR HEAVEN

submitted by Kaye

If you've ever been there, you know what Paradise is; if you've only heard or dreamed about going there, it may seem like Heaven. Having just returned from our second visit, I can honestly say Provincetown is both. P'Town is a typical Cape Cod village, with a few desirable differences. Women walk down the streets holding hands with women and men couples do the same. Over 50% of the businesses display rainbow flags with pride. As in all resort towns, there are numerous T-shirts hanging in shop windows. My favorite read, "Dip me in honey and feed me to the Lesbians."

Saturday night, we went to "Kitty's", one of the women owned bars, to see "Space Pussy." Imagine our surprise, when the band consisted of mostly men, playing heavy metal, and performing in drag. We only saw them rehearsing and singing something about "dog food and wanting more beer ??", but after waiting almost 2 hours for the show to begin, we gave up and went back to the condo.

The highlight of the visit was whale watching. We saw humpback and fin whales "arching", "breaching", and "finning". The narrator, a naturalist involved with coastal studies, said it was the first time this year that he had seen them "breach". We went a little farther and got into the middle of a pod of white sided dolphins. They rode the waves of our boats, like surfers, and would arch in groups of 2 and 3 at a time.

Another highlight, was going to "Vixens", a beautiful women's bar (why can't we have something like this closer?), where we were entertained by Phoebe Davis, a local singer, who performed a very enjoyable show.

One additional plus in that area is the wonderful sea food, we loved it.

I asked one woman how many of the population residing in P'Town were family?, and she replied with this memorable quote, "We concentrate on each other's sameness, not differences, but if I had to guess, I'd say 50%." P'Town has also (ironically), the 2nd largest per capita population of persons dying from Aids.

If you haven't been there, you need to start planning a visit now! *It is a world not to be missed.*



We are growing - it's all thanks to you - our subscribers. Let us hear from you; your comments and articles are always welcome. Be like a pebble tossed in a pond, creating ever-widening circles, reaching out until all our circles overlap.

Do you have a story regarding work, the ups and downs of everyday life, hobbies, a beloved pet or your travels? Write it down - in your own style. Don't be an anonymous name on a mailing list! This is your newsletter, we welcome your input. Feel free to respond - only your Staffers will know for sure.

Share with us a small part of your life, whether it be sadness, elation, everyday happenings, or a bit on the humorous side.

- -Jean- -

COMMUNITY EVENTS

HOLIDAY POTLUCK

Saturday, December 16

6:00 p.m.

Call 287-4548 or 271-0338 for directions

Bring a dish to pass and whatever you wish to drink--Plates and utensils will be provided.

No smoking permitted inside

Games, Cards & Friendly conversation will be plentiful.

Sharpen your TRIVIA SKILLS as there will be a prize given for Trivia contest winner.

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP

Every Tuesday

7-9 p.m.

For info, write:

LSG

P.O. Box 1612

Mishawaka, IN 46544

EVENTS COORDINATORS

Third Friday Out: Jackie (219)-291-5837

Video Night: Gloria & Julie (616)-695-7311

Sunday Brunch: Kaye & Marcia (219)-271-0338

OPEN ARMS STAFF

Sheree (616)-684-6365

Kaye & Marcia (219)-271-0338

Advertising: Kaye & Marcia

Subscriptions: Kaye & Marcia

EDITORIAL POLICY

We may edit any article submitted for length or content. We ask that all articles submitted be signed and typed, but will respect the wishes of the author by not printing her name if so requested.

PLEASE TYPE SUBMISSIONS IF POSSIBLE

If it is possible for you to type your submissions on a letter quality typewriter or printer, please do so using a 55 space line. This will make layout much easier.

Thanks.

Instead of putting others in their place, put yourself in their place.

3RD FRIDAY OUT

Szechwan Garden

313 W. McKinley

Mishawaka

Friday, Dec. 15th, 7:00 p.m.

For reservations, call Jackie by Wednesday, Dec. 13th, at (219)-291-5837

N.D. BASKETBALL

Nov.	26	Bowling Green	2pm
	28	Rutgers	7pm
Dec.	8	Marquette	8pm
	17	Valparaiso	2pm
Jan.	6	Boston College	2pm
	10	Syracuse	7pm
	18	Connecticut	7pm
	21	Georgetown	2pm
	24	St. John's	7pm
Feb.	7	Pittsburgh	7pm
	14	Villanova	7pm
	20	Miami	7pm

UP AND COMING EVENTS

Concerts in Indianapolis

Dec. 9 Cris Williamson, Tret Fure

Feb. 1-4, 8-11, 1996 Judith Sloan's, "Denial of the Fittest"

Call: 317-637-2906

Olivia Cruises

Apr. 8-15, 1996 Grand Caribbean

Jun. 25-Jul. 3, 1996 Alaska

call 1-800-631-6277 for information

The Open Arms Staff
would like to wish you a
joyful holiday and all the
best for the coming New
Year



THE CULTURAL CLEANSING

By Lee Lynch

Izzy Harbaugh prefers to be called an old lesbian. She could be sitting on her porch throwing sticks for her beloved dogs or working in her garden, but she seldom has time for such frivolity. She's got a women's bookstore to run.

Mother Kali's Books in Eugene, Oregon, is celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year, but instead of firework displays, Izzy's holding a fund raiser. Despite a supportive community and business from the university, she and her partner, Lorraine Ironplow, have helped the store financially for years. "We just can't do it any more," says Izzy. "But I don't regret any of it."

Now it's our turn. Corporate giants care nothing about lesbian and gay male readers except for the contents of our wallets. Yet Borderlands and Waldenbooks are performing a cultural cleansing that may leave us as bereft of roots as the Christian Coalition is trying to leave us of rights.

I was terrified of my first women's bookstore, Bloodroot, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, with the terror of the closeted. But the shelves and shelves of lesbian and women's books were like a promised land. I wanted to move in.

"Do women," I asked Izzy, "still tell you stories like that?"

"All the time!" she said immediately, as if I'd asked something incredibly obvious. "Yesterday a woman came in and told me that when she moved here she worked in our women's lending library and felt like she belonged."

Mother Kali's was once in what had been a parts shop attached to a garage. "The old mechanic hated us!" Izzy recalls. "There was no running water. There were gas leaks, but that didn't matter because of all the cracks in the walls. The old guy in the garage got drunk every afternoon and cursed us."

These humble institutions of our liberation quickly became chambers of commerce, meeting places, ticket outlets, living calendars and referral agencies. That hasn't changed.

Yet we often take our local vendors of gay lit for granted. "It's like women who live by the ocean," Izzy tells me, "and never see it. I love to go to the ocean."

But she's in the bookstore, always, it seems, a town crier and welcome wagon hostess. Like most bookstore workers she knows everybody, can give a sick dyke the address of a clinic, a single butch directions to a bar, a frantic customer the exact book he's looking for.

I told Izzy that without the women's, gay and alternative bookstores I'd be lost. In my town one bookstore is Christian, one is not gay-friendly. The third is not dumb enough to invite arson and boycotts by keeping my books on a shelf.

If these shops close not only are we authors silenced on a mass scale, but our publishers can't afford to print us. Without the publishers, the independent distributors who are willing to funnel gay books and records and videos could go bankrupt.

Do we want to self-publish copies of *Patience and Sarah* like Isabel Miller did 25 years ago? Let non-gay editors twist our words like they did thirty years ago to turn our lives into pulp fiction?

It's election time. We need to cast our votes at the ballot boxes, but our greenbacks vote too. Re-elect our bookstores.

Izzy's voice is rich with excitement as she tells me of the people who burst (or cautiously sidle) through Mother Kali's doors to announce, "I never knew there was such a store!" And since she and Lorraine have let the community know that the store needs help?

"There's been a heart-warming response," Izzy confides, obviously moved. She may long to be at the ocean and spend more time at home, but just try to pry Izzy - - or any of these guardians of our culture - - from their book shops. They know how much we need them. I hope we do too.

COURT OF FRIENDS

SINGLES

O.K. all you singles! Here's your opportunity to reach out to other singles. Write out what you want other singles to know about you, what you are looking for in another (be brief), and send to:

The Court of Friends

P.O.Box 1281

Niles, MI 49120

(Be sure to include your address.)

Your identity will be assigned an ID number. Your info and ID number will be published in OPEN ARMS. (It would be helpful if you would send your info early in the month so that it can be published in the next month's issue.) Also, O.A. reserves the right to edit, if necessary, for publication.

Those wishing to respond to an ID Single may do so by writing whatever you wish, putting it in a stamped, sealed envelope with the intended ID number on the front (in pencil). Place your message in another stamped envelope and mail to the above P.O.Box.

Upon receiving your message, the ID number will be replaced with the corresponding name and address and mailed. Then you're on your own. *COME ON SINGLES! Someone special wants to know you're out there!*

38 Hi, I am looking forward to hearing from you. I am honest, gentle, loving and full of enthusiasm. I enjoy conversation, church, movies, music, reading, dancing, the beach, and spending time with that special someone in my life. I am feminine and considered attractive by my friends. I enjoy the simple things in life. I'm in search of someone between the ages of 26 - 40 with similar characteristics and interests. I prefer a non-smoker, non-drinker. Let's begin with friendship and take it from there.

39 It has been said that "good things come to those who wait." I am tired of waiting! This 37 year old has a passion for life. My interests are varied and include music, movies and bowling. I am an open, honest, loving person.

I believe in romance. I am secure with who and what I am. I am considered attractive but outer "beauty" is not important to me. I do not play head games or do one nighters.

I would like to meet someone who has a positive personality, likes to laugh, and is looking for a possible relationship. She must be secure enough with herself to be able to accept me as I am. You see, I am comfortable in jeans or dresses, denim or lace. I like giving roses as well as receiving them. I can be quite shy or very assertive.

Do I interest you? If so, I would love to hear from you.

40 Non-smoker, social drinker, 35 years, with 1 child seeks female friendship and possible relationship. If you're tired of being alone and not too afraid to start all over, let's get together and see what happens.

41 Attractive 55 year old lady is looking for a mature, honest relationship. I'm 5'3", ash blonde, blue eyes, freckles. My interests include anything outdoors, golf, music, sports, quiet dinners. Prefer non-drinker, no drugs. Would like to meet a lady 40's plus. No bi's or playgirls, please.

42 I am 30 yrs. old. I have been employed 8 1/2 yrs. with a millwork corp. I enjoy listening to and performing music. I like sports and am very mechanical.

I would like to meet someone sensitive, kind, and caring with a good personality. Someone sharp minded and easy going.

43 Sensible, professional, fun-loving lesbian, looking for same! If you are adventurous, kind-hearted, thirty-ish, and enjoy life, I've been looking for you for a long time!

44 **LOOKIN FOR SOMEONE:** ... Single, attractive, 30-40 ...Professional, employed, college-educated...Doesn't smoke, do drugs, drink beyond occassion...Honest, loyal, romantic... God, spirituality, values are important...Appreciates nature, the arts,

humor...Communicative, mutual, healthy relationship important...Old-fashioned, liberal, open-minded...Motivated, high aspirations and goals...Wants possible serious, long term relationship with a strong friendship foundation.

Life is like a grindstone - whether it polishes you up or grinds you down depends on the stuff you're made of.



Just a cup of coffee or a coke.

Dear Readers, staff

I'm afraid that some of you are taking the *Court of Friends* too seriously. You may feel that if you respond to one of our Write-Ins, you are making some kind of life time commitment. Lighten up! Make it just a simple meeting with someone who might be a friend. Or think of it as just something to do for one evening rather than staying alone...Be brave, meet someone new.

You don't have to even give your phone number or address (If you're afraid of getting into something you don't like.) Just write and say you'll be (Let's say.) at McDonalds at 7:00, wearing green shoes. If she can meet you, you two can get to know each other a little over a coke, fries, and a cheeseburger. How threatening can that be? How bad could it be even if you end up eating alone? (You might want to offer 2 meetings, because it may be impossible to make one of the meeting times. I'd suggest a weekday evening and a weekend afternoon.) If you want to meet again, then you can make a date there and then. If you're not sure, just ask for another dinner, game, etc. outing to get to know each other a little better...If you can't stand the person you've met, just let her know that there is someone else that you're interested in. You can use what ever excuse works for you, but remember to be careful with her feelings. She just might turn out to be an important friend/acquaintance somewhere later in your life. Also remember that it took considerable courage for her to write into Open Arms in the first place. That, in it'self, deserves some respect.

Put yourself in the shoes of these "Write-Ins". Some have high hopes, but would be encouraged and happy to just make a friend, or, at the very least, experience one pleasant hour or so with a nice woman who shared some similar interests. It breaks my heart to have wimin write to me, after being in Open Arms, and ask to be dropped because NO ONE, NOT ONE, woman in our community could afford to have one cup of coffee with her. How big a stake do you have in meeting her. I can remember a time, when I was alone, when I would have driven all the way to Texas for just one date,... just one,... with a total stranger....All on a hope. We all can be disappointed, but if we think of her and not just ourselves, and offer a little time and perhaps a plain good evening, at least you may have given her something important. Perhaps, her self-esteem will rise and she'll venture out even more in taking risks with other community events. You might also be surprised to find that as you get to know her, she can be very dear, even if she is not Ellen Degenerous. Perhaps you're not Ellen either, but you're just as beautiful and exciting and wonderful to those who know you.

The thing is, to just have someone that you can look forward to going out with on a weekend, to lets say a movie and a nice dinner, would be a treasure to many wimin. It may be all some are looking for.

Readers, can you find it in your heart to be a little more adventurous...If I weren't in a relationship, 10 years now, I would sure be writing some of these wimin myself. I have the privilege of knowing some of our Write-Ins and believe me they are not losers. On the contrary, I would love to date two of them, if I were single. Maybe they wouldn't care for me, but I think I'd give it a try. What's your excuse.

**If you try...you will succeed!
If you don't....you won't.**

**Lavendar Life Magazine Announces
2nd Annual Writing Contest**

Lavendar Life, a monthly nationwide lesbian magazine, has announced a writing contest to celebrate the beginning of their fifth year in January 1996. Every woman is invited to enter and prizes will be awarded.

All original short stories and poetry received by Dec. 31, 1995 will automatically be entered in the contest. Winners will be announced in their January 1996 Anniversary Issue. All entrants who are published will receive a complimentary issue, mailed with their privacy in mind. All writers will retain final rights to their short stories and/or poetry.

For more information or to send your entry write to:

Lavendar Life, P.O. Box 898, Binghamton, NY 13902-0898 Attention: Pamela K. Fite



MICHIANA MOMAZONS

Momazons is having a meeting and potluck on Sunday December 3, at 4:00 P.M. Please bring a dish to pass. For more information contact Laura or Nancy, 1419 Maple Street, Niles, Michigan, 616-684-7362

LAVENDAR RHYTHM Dance Committee is looking for wimmin to display their crafts, hobbies, and ect. at our next dance on Saturday, March 9, 1996. The display area will be adjacent to the dance floor so that wimmin who are attending the dance can look over the display. At present, we have 6 wimmin who will be displaying their wares, and we would like more to participate. If you are interested please write to: Lavendar Rhythm, P.O. Box 1002, Niles, Michigan, 49120

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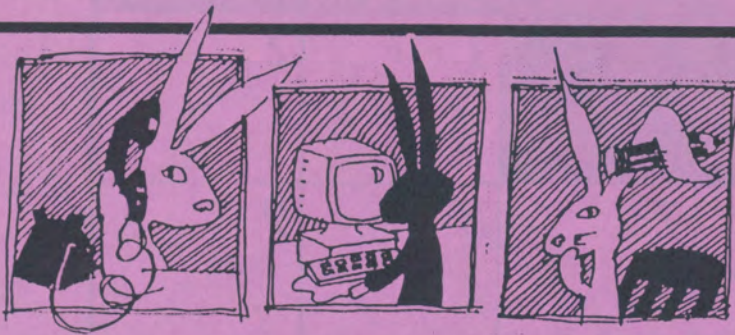
(219) 272-6194
Sandy Berta - Owner

IN THE NEWS

N.Y.'s highest court declared that unmarried people, gay or hetrosexual, have a right to adopt their partner's children. N.Y. is the 3rd state after Vermont and Massachusetts whose courts have recognized the right of a person in a homosexual relationship to adopt the other partner's child. The District of Columbia has also legalized such adoptions.
from the Chicago Sun-Times

A jury in Florida has recommended execution for a man convicted of killing another man who prosecutors say was targeted because he was gay. It only took minutes for jurors to recommend that Ronald Knight, 27, die in the electric chair for killing Brendan Meehan, 22, after they left a nightclub together on May 8, of this year.
from the South Bend Tribune

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December 1995

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	6 NOW Meeting St. Joe Library 7:00 p.m.	7	8	9
10 Open Arms Mtg. 6:30 p.m.	11	12 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	13 Reservations due for Third Fri. Out	14	15 Third Friday Out 7:00 p.m.	16 Holiday Potluck 6:00 p.m.
17	18	19 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	20	21	22	23
24 PFLAG Meeting 2:00-4:00 p.m.	25	26 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	27	28	29	30
31						

November 95

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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26	27	28	29	30		

January 96

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

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Make checks payable to Open Arms and mail it to:
Open Arms, P.O. 845, Mishawaka, IN 46546

MISSION STATEMENT

Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community.

OPEN ARMS DEADLINE/MEETING

The deadline for submissions for the December *Open Arms* is December 10th. Submissions can be mailed to Open Arms, P. O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN 46546 or given to Sheree or Kaye. Submissions received after December 10th may not be published in the January newsletter.

Newsletter meeting: Sunday, December 10th, 1995, at 6:30p.m. Call 271-0338 for directions.